



May 26, 2015

Michigan House of Representatives—Commerce and Trade Committee

RE: MEC Supports HB 4422

The Michigan Environmental Council is a coalition of over 70 environmental, conservation and faith-based organizations located across Michigan. These organizations place a high priority on transportation issues, and particularly passenger transportation issues, as key to Michigan's economic success, good quality of life, and environmental prosperity. MEC urges you to support HB 4422.

This bill would give local property owners the ability to assess a fee on themselves to develop and finance transit-oriented development (TOD) and transit-oriented facilities. TOD is a widely-recognized development practice that encourages walkable, multi-use development along public transit lines and around transit hubs. The interconnectedness of efficient, easy-to-use public transit systems with housing, jobs, education and entertainment allows both to flourish—creating opportunities for economic development and access to opportunity.

People and businesses in communities all over the country are leveraging benefits of connecting public transit and development through TOD districts, like those that would be allowable under this bill. For example:

- Local TOD districts in Minneapolis which create special zones and financing opportunities, have helped spur \$2.5 billion in development among 121 projects along the new "Green Line" light rail service along an 11 mile corridor and has surpassed ridership projections by 35 percent; supporting over one million rides per month.
- In Cleveland, TOD guidelines and policies put in place by the regional transit authority have helped capture value from the Healthline bus rapid transit (BRT). The BRT line has encouraged \$5.8 Billion in new development along the seven mile corridor—leveraging \$114.54 return for every \$1 spent on the BRT infrastructure itself.

Corridors along the Silverline bus rapid transit (BRT) line in Grand Rapids and M-1 Rail in Detroit are already experiencing development along the corridors where they run. HB 4422 would allow both businesses and public transit to capitalize on opportunities like those mentioned above, on the terms and by the will of property owners themselves.

As always, we are available to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Liz Treutel, Policy Associate